AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Withdrawn) A bolster plate for use in supporting a printed circuit board during attachment of an integrated circuit chip to the printed circuit board, comprising:

a support rail presenting a contact face for use in contacting the printed circuit board;

the rail demarcating a central well;

the central well containing a support surface configured to support a selected area underneath the integrated circuit chip during attachment of the integrated circuit chip to the printed circuit board;

an insulator covering the support surface; and

a shim interposed between the insulator and the support surface.

2. (Withdrawn) The bolster plate of claim 1, wherein the shim has predetermined dimensions operable to compensate for bending of the bolster plate under a maximum applied load during attachment of the integrated circuit chip to the printed circuit board.

3. (Withdrawn) The bolster plate of claim 2, wherein the predetermined dimensions are selected from results of finite element modeling of bending characteristics of the .bolster plate under the maximum applied load.

4. (Withdrawn) The bolster plate of claim 3, wherein the predetermined dimensions are sufficient to impart less that 0.001 inch bow at a center of the bolster plate under the maximum applied load.

5. (Withdrawn) The bolster plate of claim 3, wherein the predetermined dimensions are sufficient to impart less that 0.0005 inch bow at a center of the bolster plate under the maximum applied load.

6. (Withdrawn) The bolster plate of claim 1, wherein the shim is a disk.

7. (Withdrawn) The bolster plate of claim 1, wherein the shim comprises at least two different pieces of different dimensions.

8. (Withdrawn) The bolster plate of claim 1, further comprising the integrated circuit chip and the printed circuit board assembled to the bolster plate.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of attaching an integrated circuit chip to a chip mounting receptacle in a printed circuit board with use of a bolster plate ~~to~~ for support ~~the printed circuit board~~, the method comprising the steps of:

assembling a bolster plate that includes

a support rail presenting a contact face positioned for use in supporting ~~contacting~~ the printed circuit board while the integrated circuit chip is mounted into the chip mounting receptacle,

the rail demarcating a central well,

the central well containing a support surface configured to support a selected area ~~portion of the printed circuit board~~ underneath the integrated circuit chip during attachment of the integrated circuit chip to the ~~printed circuit board~~chip mounting receptacle,

an insulator covering the support surface, and

a shim interposed between the insulator and the support surface, the shim presenting predetermined dimensions selected to relieve stress in overlying components during insertion of the integrated circuit chip into the chip mounting receptacle by action of the shim on the support surface;

attaching the bolster plate to the printed circuit board; and

pressing the integrated circuit chip into the chip mounting receptacle under an applied load such that the applied load causes the shim to deform the support surface and the predetermined dimensions of the shim compensate for deformation of the support surface to control stress-induced bending of overlying components within design limits.

10. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 9, wherein the step of assembling the bolster plate comprises

modeling a bending moment in the bolster plate under ~~a maximum~~ the applied load ~~for use~~ used in the step of pressing the integrated circuit chip to

provide model results for shim-based compensation of the bending moment, and

selecting the predetermined dimensions of the shim based upon the model results.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 10, wherein the step of modeling the bending moment comprises modeling a plurality of separate shim components.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 9, wherein the step of pressing the integrated circuit chip comprises inducing a bow at the center of the bolster plate having a magnitude less than 0.001 inch.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 12, wherein the magnitude is less than 0.0005 inch.

14. (Withdrawn) A computer readable form comprising machine instructions operable for:

determining a bow deformation in a bolster plate when the bolster plate is placed under a maximum load during attachment of an integrated circuit chip; and

identifying dimensions for a shim that may be used to compensate for the bow deformation.

15. (Withdrawn) The computer readable form of claim 14, wherein the shim comprises a plurality of pieces having different dimensions.

16. (New) A method of attaching an integrated circuit chip to a chip mounting receptacle in a printed circuit board with use of a bolster plate to support the printed circuit board, the method comprising the steps of:

assembling a bolster plate that includes

a support rail presenting a contact face for use in contacting-the printed circuit board,

the rail demarcating a central well,

the central well containing a support surface configured to support a selected portion of the printed circuit board-underneath the integrated circuit chip during attachment of the integrated circuit chip to the printed circuit board,

an insulator covering the support surface, and

a shim interposed between the insulator and the support surface;

attaching the bolster plate to the printed circuit board; and

pressing the integrated circuit chip into the chip mounting receptacle,

wherein the step of assembling the bolster plate comprises

modeling a bending moment in the bolster plate under a maximum applied load for use in the step of pressing the integrated circuit chip to provide model results for shim-based compensation of the bending moment, and

selecting dimensions of the shim based upon the model results.

17. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein the step of modeling the bending moment comprises modeling a plurality of separate shim components.